What is claimed is:

1. A method for selecting an operating mode of a telephony system, comprising:

detecting at least one person within a predetermined area, the area being associated with the telephony system;

communicating a detection signal to the telephony system responsive to detecting the at least one person; and

operating the telephony system in a first operating mode responsive to the absence of the detection signal, and in a second operating mode responsive to receipt of the detection signal.

2. The method of claim 1, further including displaying a first data set in the first operating mode, and a second data set in the second operating mode.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the second data set is different than the first data set, and wherein displaying is one of: remote from the predetermined area, and simultaneously remote to and within the predetermined area.

4. The method of claim 1, further including disabling at least one of the operating modes in response to an inactive-user condition.

5. The method of claim 4, further including detecting that said at least one person is no longer within the predetermined area to provide the inactive-user condition.

6. The method of claim 2, wherein the first and second data sets each include operational mode information, and occupancy information for the predetermined area.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein operational mode information includes status of a telephone device located within the predetermined area.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein status includes information concerning at least one condition selected from the group consisting of: call-waiting, call-transfer, voice mail, "do not disturb," telephone device malfunction, and off-hook.

9. The method of claim 1, further including routing calls designating a destination identifier to a first telephone device in the first operating mode, and to a second telephone device in the second operating mode.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the second telephone device is a telephone set located within the predetermined area.

11. The method of claim 9, wherein the first telephone device is one of: a voice mail box, cellular telephone, pager, and telephone set located outside the predetermined area.

12. The method of claim 9, further including identifying the at least one detected person.

13. The method of claim 12, further including selecting the first and second telephone devices responsive to the destination identifier and detected presence of the at least one identified person.

14. A telephony system having a selectable operating mode, comprising:

means for detecting at least one person within a predetermined area, the area being associated with the telephony system;

means for communicating a detection signal to the telephony system responsive to detecting the at least one person; and

means for operating the telephony system in a first operating mode responsive to the absence of the detection signal, and in a second operating mode responsive to receipt of the detection signal.

15. The telephony system of claim 14, further comprising means for displaying a first data set in the first operating mode, and a second data set in the second operating mode.

16. The telephony system of claim 14, further comprising means for routing calls designating a destination identifier to a first telephone device in the first operating mode, and to a second telephone device in the second operating mode.

17. The telephony system of claim 14, further comprising means for identifying the at least one detected person.

18. A telephony system having a selectable operating mode, comprising:

a detection circuit adapted to detect at least one person within a predetermined area, the area being associated with the telephony system;

a communication circuit adapted to communicate a detection signal to the telephony system responsive to detecting the at least one person; and

a controller arrangement adapted to operate the telephony system in a first operating mode responsive to the absence of the detection signal, and in a second operating mode responsive to receipt of the detection signal.

19. The telephony system of claim 18, further comprising a display arrangement adapted to display a first data set in the first operating mode, and a second data set in the second operating mode.

20. The telephony system of claim 18, further comprising a routing circuit adapted to route calls designating a destination identifier to a first telephone device in the first operating mode, and to a second telephone device in the second operating mode.

21. The telephony system of claim 18, further comprising an identification circuit adapted to identify the at least one detected person.

22. The telephony system of claim 18, further including means, responsive to an inactive-user condition, for disabling at least one of the operating modes.

23. The telephony system of claim 22, further including means for detecting that said at least one person is no longer within the predetermined area to provide the inactive-user condition.